

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NEW MOVES ON BLACK EDUCATION

1. MINISTER OF BANTU ADMINISTRATION AND EDUCATION M.C. BOTHA
ANNOUNCED DECEMBER 29 PLANS FOR A NUMBER OF CHANGES AND IMPROVE-
MENTS IN BLACK EDUCATION TO TAKE PLACE OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL
YEARS. THE MAIN POINTS OF THE NEW PROGRAM ARE:

A. BLACK PARENTS ENROLLING THEIR CHILDREN IN SCHOOL FOR
FIRST TIME IN 1977 WILL BE REQUIRED TO SIGN UNDERTAKING TO
KEEP THEM IN SCHOOL FOR AT LEAST FOUR YEARS. THIS IS
INTENDED AS FIRST MOVE TOWARD COMPULSORY EDUCATION.

B. BEGINNING IN JANUARY 1978 FREE TEXT BOOKS WILL BE
PROVIDED FOR PULILS IN FORMS THREE THROUGH TEN (U.S. GRADES
5-12). IN 1979 THIS WILL BE EXPANDED TO FORMS 1-10 (U.S. 3-12).
THIS IS BEING BILLED AS FIRST STEP TOWARD FREE BLACK
EDUCATION. BLACKS, UNLIKE WHITES, WILL STILL BE REQUIRED
TO PAY SCHOOL FEES.

C. TWENTY BLACK ADULT EDUCATION CENTERS WILL BE ESTABLISHED
IN VARIOUS PARTS OF SOUTH AFRICA IN 1977.

D. THE DEPARTMENT OF BANTU EDUCATION WILL BEGIN TO
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PAY FOR CONSTRUCTION OF SOME BLACK HIGH SCHOOLS. (TO
DATE, COMMUNITY INVOLVED HAS HAD TO BEAR ENTIRE COST.)

E. MORE TEACHER TRAINING SCHOOLS WILL BE BUILT IN THE
HOMELANDS.

F. OTHER, UNSPECIFIED STEPS ARE PLANNED TO IMPROVE TEACHER
STUDENT RATIO AND TRY TO ELIMINATE DOUBLE SESSIONS NEEDED

AT MANY BLACK SCHOOLS.

G. SOME FUNDS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR BLACK TEACHERS TO IMPROVE THEIR QUALIFICATIONS THROUGH CORRESPONDENCE STUDY. AT PRESENT, 96 PERCENT OF BLACK TEACHERS HAVE ONLY THE EQUIVALENT OF TWO YEARS HIGH SCHOOL PLUS TEACHING DIPLOMA.

H. LOCAL SCHOOL COMMITTEES WILL IN FUTURE BE ELECTED BY COMMUNITY. PREVIOUSLY MAJORITY OF ALL COMMITTEES APPOINTED BY BANTU EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

2. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH BOTHA'S ANNOUNCEMENT HAS BEEN AHILED IN SOME QUARTERS AS GIANT STEP TOWARD FREE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION FOR BLACKS, IN REALITY PROGRAM FALLS FAR SHORT OF THIS. NEW EDUCATION PLAN IS IN FACT SIMILAR TO LIMITED CONCESSIONS GRANTED IN RECENT WEEKS ON OTHER ISSUES, SUCH AS "INDEFINITE LEASEHOLD LEASES" FOR URBAN BLACKS, AND INCREASED POWER FOR URBAN BANTU COUNCILS. ANNOUNCEMENT IS REPORTEDLY RESULT OF TALKS BETWEEN BOTHA AND HOMELAND MINISTERS OF EDUCATION, WITHOUT CONSULTATIONS WITH URBAN BLACK EDUCATORS. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THIS MOVE WILL HAVE THE DESIRED EFFECT OF PLACATING URBAN BLACK STUDENTS AND OTHERS WHO HAVE DEMANDED COMPLETE SCRAPPING OF BANTU EDUCATION SYSTEM. THE MEASURES ANNOUNCED FALL WITHIN THE CATEGORY OF "FRINGE BENEFITS" THAT SAG SEEMS TO REGARD AS THE MOST IT CAN OR NEEDS TO OFFER IN THE HOPE OF BLUNTING BLACK FRUSTRATIONS.
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